

**REMARKS:**

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action of August 15, 2003. Claims 18-20 and 23-30 have been rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,550,540 to Thorn. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Thorn discloses a compression molded door assembly that includes door skins formed from sheet molding compound (SMC). Specifically, each skin is formed from SMC that includes 15-40% fibrous glass reinforcement, along with 10-40% mineral filler in the molding resin. (See '540 patent, column 2, lines 41-45). In the present invention, at least one of the door skins is a molded wood composite door skin. Applicant has amended claims 18 and 20 in clarification. No new matter has been added.

Furthermore, Thorn fails to disclose or suggest a door skin having a bond strength of at least about  $2.0 \text{ N/mm}^2$ , as set forth in claim 18 in the present application. Likewise, Thorn fails to disclose or suggest a door skin formed by pressing a loose bat or mat into a flat door blank having a density of at least about  $550 \text{ kg/m}^3$ , and thereafter moisturizing, heating, and reforming in a press the flat blank, as provided in claim 20 of the present application.

Standard molded door skins typically have a bond strength of about  $1.4 \text{ N/mm}^2$  or less. (See Specification, page 9, lines 11-13). Thus, the door skins according to the present invention have a substantially higher bond strength, and may have a bond strength of more than twice that of a standard flush or flat skin. (See Specification, page 9, lines 8-11).

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a bond strength as set forth in claim

18. However, the claimed bond strength is not typical of molded door skins.

Furthermore, Thorn fails to disclose or suggest a door skin having the claimed bond strength. "The mere fact that the prior art could be so modified would not have made the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification."

*In re Mills*, 16 USPQ2d 1430, 1432 (Fed. Cir. 1990); see also *In re Gordon*, 221 USPQ 1125, 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1984). As such, a prima facie case of obviousness has not been made.

In light of the arguments, as well as amended claims 18 and 20, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection. Allowance of all pending claims is earnestly solicited. A request for an Extension of Time for three (3) months is submitted herewith, along with the requisite fee. It is believed that no other fees are due with this submission. Should that determination be incorrect, then please debit Account No. 50-0548 and notify the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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